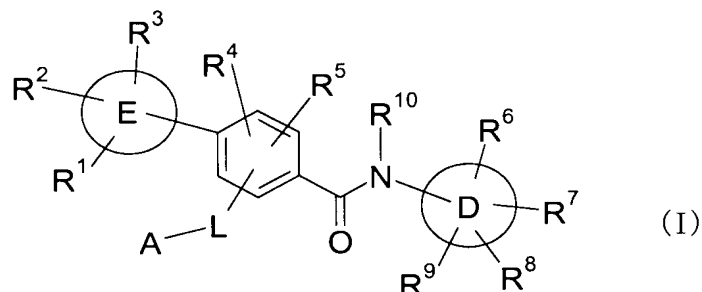


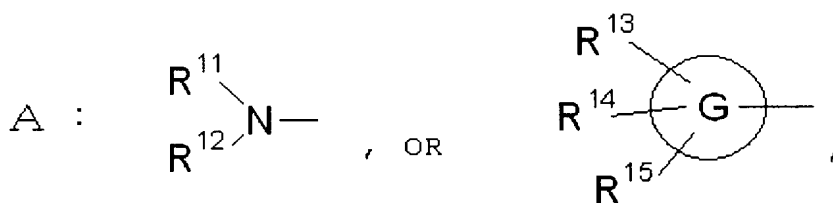
IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): A benzamide derivative represented by formula (I):



wherein the symbols have the following meanings:



L: a lower alkylene;

D ring: a bicyclic heteroaromatic ring selected from the group consisting of quinoline, dihydroquinoline, and tetrahydroquinoline;

E ring: a monocyclic or bicyclic hydrocarbon ring, or a 5- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaromatic ring containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O;

G ring: a 4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O;

R¹ to R⁹: the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl, a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, -OH, -SH, -O-lower alkyl, -O-lower alkyl-NH-lower alkyl, -O-lower alkyl-N(lower alkyl)₂, =O, -NH₂, -NH-lower alkyl, -N(lower alkyl)₂, -S-lower alkyl, -SO-lower alkyl, -SO₂-lower alkyl, -CN, -COOH, -C(=O)-O-lower alkyl,

$-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{NH}_2$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{NH}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{N}(\text{lower alkyl})_2$, $-\text{NH}-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{O}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{NH}-\text{SO}_2-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{SO}_2-\text{NH}_2$, $-\text{SO}_2-\text{NH}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{NO}_2$ or a nitrogen-containing saturated heterocycle;

R^{10} : a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl;

R^{11} to R^{15} : the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl, a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, $-\text{OH}$, $-\text{O}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{S}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{SO}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{SO}_2-\text{lower alkyl}$, $=\text{O}$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})\text{H}$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{COOH}$, $-\text{CN}$, $-\text{NH}_2$, $-\text{NH}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{N}(\text{lower alkyl})_2$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{NH}_2$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{NH}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{N}(\text{lower alkyl})_2$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{aryl}$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{NH}-\text{aryl}$, $-\text{NH}-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{NH}-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{aryl}$, $-\text{NH}-\text{SO}_2-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{N}(\text{lower alkyl})-\text{SO}_2-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{NH}-\text{SO}_2-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{NH}-\text{SO}_2-\text{aryl}$, $-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{O}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{OH}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{NH}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{N}(\text{lower alkyl})_2$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{NH}_2$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{OH}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{O}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{S}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{O}-\text{C}(=\text{O})-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{NH}-\text{lower alkyl}$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{N}(\text{lower alkyl})_2$, $-\text{lower alkylene}-\text{aryl}$, a cycloalkyl, an aryl,

$-(4\text{- to }12\text{-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing }1\text{ to }4\text{ atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O}),$

$-\text{O}-(4\text{- to }12\text{-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing }1\text{ to }4\text{ atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O}),$

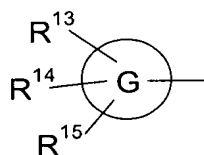
$-\text{lower alkylene}-(4\text{- to }12\text{-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing }1\text{ to }4\text{ atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O}),$

$-\text{C}(=\text{O})-(4\text{- to }12\text{-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing }1\text{ to }4\text{ atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O}),$

–lower alkylene–N(lower alkyl)–(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O), or
–C(=O)–NH–(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),
and the above monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle may be substituted by halogen atom(s), lower alkyl(s), –O–lower alkyl, or –OH;
or a salt thereof.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the E ring in formula (I) is a benzene or thiophene ring.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 2 or a salt thereof, wherein the A ring in formula (I) is:



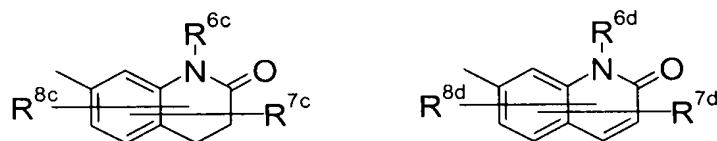
wherein the G ring and R¹³ to R¹⁵ have the same meanings as in formula (I).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 3 or a salt thereof, wherein the G ring is a nitrogen-containing saturated heterocycle wherein a ring nitrogen atom is bonded to L.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 4 or a salt thereof, wherein the G ring is selected from the group consisting of morpholine, piperidine, and pyrrolidine, wherein a ring nitrogen atom of the ring group is bonded to L.

Claims 6-7 (Canceled)

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 3 or a salt thereof, wherein the D ring, together with the groups represented by R^6 to R^9 to be bonded thereto, form a group represented by the following formulae:

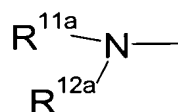


wherein the symbols have the following meanings:

R^{6c} and R^{6d} : the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl, or a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, and

R^{7c} , R^{8c} , R^{7d} , and R^{8d} : the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl, or a halogen-substituted lower alkyl.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 2 or a salt thereof, wherein the A ring is represented by:



wherein the symbols have the following meanings:

R^{11a} and R^{12a} : the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl, a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, $-O$ -lower alkyl, $-SO_2$ -lower alkyl, $-C(=O)H$, $-C(=O)$ -lower alkyl, $-CN$, $-NH_2$, $-NH$ -lower alkyl, $-N$ (lower alkyl) $_2$, $-C(=O)-NH_2$, $-C(=O)-NH$ -lower alkyl, $-C(=O)-N$ (lower alkyl) $_2$, $-C(=O)$ -aryl, $-C(=O)-NH$ -aryl, $-NH-C(=O)$ -lower alkyl, $-NH-C(=O)$ -aryl, $-NH-SO_2$ -lower alkyl, $-N$ (lower alkyl)- SO_2 -lower alkyl, -lower

alkylene-NH-SO₂-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-NH-SO₂-aryl, -C(=O)-O-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-OH, -lower alkylene-C(=O)-NH-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-C(=O)-N(lower alkyl)₂, -lower alkylene-C(=O)-NH₂, -lower alkylene-C(=O)-OH, -lower alkylene-O-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-S-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-O-C(=O)-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-NH-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-N(lower alkyl)₂, -lower alkylene-aryl, a cycloalkyl, an aryl,

- (4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),

- O-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),

- lower alkylene-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),

- C(=O)-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O),

- lower alkylene-N(lower alkyl)-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O), or

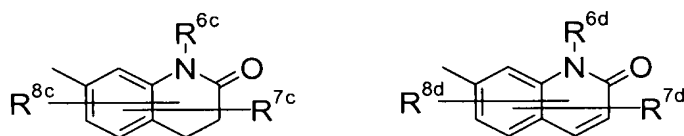
- C(=O)-NH-(4- to 12-membered monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle containing 1 to 4 atoms selected from the group consisting of N, S, and O), and

the above monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle may be substituted by a halogen atom, a lower alkyl, -O-lower alkyl, or -OH.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 9 or a salt thereof, wherein R^{11a} is a lower alkyl and R^{12a} is a group selected from the group consisting of -lower alkylene-O-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-S-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-NH-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-N(lower alkyl)₂, -lower alkylene-OH, -lower alkylene-C(=O)-NH-lower alkyl, -lower alkylene-C(=O)-N(lower alkyl)₂, -lower alkylene-aryl, a cycloalkyl, an aryl, -(monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle), and -lower alkylene-(monocyclic or bicyclic heterocycle).

Claims 11-12 (Canceled):

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The compound according to claim 9 or a salt thereof, wherein the D ring, together with the groups represented by R^6 to R^9 to be bonded thereto, form a group represented by the following formulae:



wherein the symbols have the following meanings:

R^{6c} and R^{6d} : the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a lower alkyl, or a halogen-substituted lower alkyl, and

R^{7c} , R^{8c} , R^{7d} , and R^{8d} : the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl, or a halogen-substituted lower alkyl.

Claim 14 (Canceled):

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): A pharmaceutical composition comprising a benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) according to claim 1 or a salt thereof and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claims 16-18 (Canceled):

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): A method for treating pain, which comprises administering a therapeutically effective amount of a benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, to a patient in need thereof.

Claim 20 (Canceled):

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is 2-[(2,5-dimethylpyrrolidin-1-yl)methyl]-N-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)biphenyl-4-carboxamide.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is N-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)-2-[(2-methylpyrrolidin-1-yl)methyl]biphenyl-4-carboxamide.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is 2-{{[ethyl(tetrahydro-2*H*-pyran-4-yl)amino]methyl}}-*N*-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)biphenyl-4-carboxamide.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is *N*-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)-3-(piperidin-1-ylmethyl)-4-(2-thienyl)benzamide.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is 2-{{[ethyl(tetrahydro-2*H*-thiopyran-4-yl)amino]methyl}}-*N*-(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)biphenyl-4-carboxamide.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The compound according to claim 1 or a salt thereof, wherein the benzamide derivative represented by formula (I) is *N,N*-diethyl-4-[(4-{{[(1-methyl-2-oxo-1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolin-7-yl)amino]carbonyl}}biphenyl-2-yl)methyl]morpholine-3-carboxamide.

Claims 27-28 (Canceled):